

On the day that the UK was set to leave the European Union, Christians across England are coming together to pray.



As Parliament remains deadlocked on what happens next for Brexit, the initiative from the Archbishops of Canterbury and York encourages churches to invite people in to join together in dialogue and prayer as part of five days of prayer for the nation and our ongoing relationship with Europe.

At St Botolph's Parish Church in Boston, Lincolnshire a drop-in session begins at 6pm on Saturday.

The Bishop of Grantham, Dr Nicholas Chamberlain who will attend the Boston event, said: "In a time of great uncertainty, the one thing we can do is to come together and pray together and in doing that we are sending out an important sign that whatever our differences are perceived to be, we can be united.

"Boston and the surrounding area expressed a strong preference to leave in 2016. However, even in Boston, there were those who voted to stay.

"As we know, the political situation is unclear and there are still strong differences of opinion. Given that, the one thing we can do is to come together and pray together and in doing that we are sending out an important sign that whatever our differences are perceived to be, we have the capacity to be united.

"The church in Boston considers itself to be a place of hospitality and where there are deep differences hospitality matters."

Chelmsford Cathedral will be holding a service of Eucharist followed by a gathering for anyone who wishes to attend. The Bishop of Chelmsford, Stephen Cottrell, will be present, joined by local politicians.

Bishop Stephen said: "Whether you voted leave or remain, the one thing that does unite us about Brexit is a concern that our nation itself is feeling divided. On Saturday Chelmsford Cathedral invites you to come and talk about how we can work together and to pray for unity and peace in our nation and in Europe.

"We won't be discussing Brexit itself, but how we can re-establish those British values of respect and tolerance and working for the common good that the Brexit process has obscured. All are welcome. There will be a Eucharist at 8.15. Informal prayers at 9.00am. And the kettle will be on."

On Friday, Leicester Cathedral will host a prayer vigil led by the Bishop of Loughborough, Guli Francis-Dehqani, Chair of the European Council of Churches, while at Wakefield Cathedral, prayer cards will be available for those who come into the cathedral to pray for peace and for one another in challenging times.

Derby Cathedral is marking five days of prayer for peace, reconciliation and a good way forward over what would have been the Brexit weekend.

From 29th March until 2nd April the Cathedral is inviting people to come in during the day and say a prayer for the nation, for their neighbours, for Members of Parliament and political leaders, and for peace, hope and good will.

The Dean of Derby, the Very Revd Stephen Hance said: "After what has been a divisive political process during the last three years, we want people to be encouraged to pray for someone they disagree with, as a step towards reconciliation and a fresh vision for the whole country.

"I hope everyone in the city, including citizens of other EU countries whose future here has been made uncertain since the referendum, will feel welcome to come and say a prayer or take a few moments to be still in the Cathedral, which is here for the whole of Derby and Derbyshire as a sign of healing and peace."

God of hope, in these times of change, unite our nation and guide our leaders with your wisdom. Give us courage to overcome our fears, and help us to build a future in

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